

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is earnestly requested.

Claims 1, 10-11, and 16-17 are amended as shown above and claims 7-9 and 15 are cancelled without prejudice in this paper, and claim 18 previously has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 1 and 4-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Krautz et al. (US 4,334,341), and claims 2-3, 11-17, and 19-20 as being unpatentable over Krautz in view of Latella et al. (US 5,738,954). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant appreciates approval of the terminal disclaimer filed on August 25, 2006.

Krautz relates to a buckle for a safety belt. Referring to Fig. 3, Krautz discloses an opening wedge 24 (analogous to the lock release device of claim 1) that is located in a plane above the main dimensions of the pressings 12, 13 (analogous to the locking members). The opening wedge is moved to the left in the plane of the pressings to force apart projections 22, 23 mounted on the pressings 12, 13 to swivel the latches 9 into the open position. See, Krautz, col. 2: 49-58.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that “the lock release device moves orthogonally to each of the plurality of locking members.” As disclosed in Krautz, the release mechanism for the buckle moves in a plane parallel to that of the latches, and that when pressed the opening wedge moves the latches apart. In contrast, claim 1 now recites that the lock release device moves orthogonally to the locking members. Krautz does not teach the orthogonal movement of the lock release device. This amendment finds support in paragraph 0029 and in Figs. 6 and 8. No new matter has been added.

Independent claim 11 has been similarly amended. Dependent claims 10, 16, and 17 have been amended to clarify the claims language and to correct dependencies and antecedents.

Latella is referred to as teaching a battery cover for a mobile telephone, but does not teach or reasonably suggest a lock release device moving orthogonally to the locking members.

As set forth in MPEP 2143, to show a *prima facie* case for obviousness, all the prior art references, either individually or combined, must teach all the claim limitations. Neither Krautz nor Latella teach or suggest "the lock release device moves orthogonally to each of the plurality of locking members," and applicant submits that a *prima facie* case for obviousness has not been shown and that claims 1 and 11 are patentable over the cited prior art. Additionally, claims 2-6, 10, 12-14, and 16-20 would be patentable at least by virtue of their dependence upon a patentable independent claim.

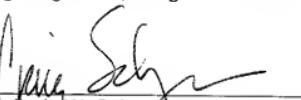
CONCLUSION

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain at issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at (213) 623-2221.

Respectfully submitted,
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